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No Reservations

No Reservations **is a monthly newsletter published by RQA Inc. for the restaurant industry.**

Inside this issue:

Main Course— Stored Product Pests 1

On the Side— *Pathogen Spotlight: E. Coli 0157:H7* 1

Daily Special—*Le plat du jour* 2



Stored Product Pests

There are many challenges managing a restaurant and one of them is pest control. The health department has the power to suspend a restaurant's permit if there is clear evidence of an infestation of pests (insects and/or rodents). In addition to mice and rats, product pests have been troubling mankind for thousands of years by ruining stored foods. Some of the more common insect pests that you need to be aware of are:



Confused and/or Red Flour Beetles

These small beetles (about 1/8 inch long) are reddish in color. The confused flour beetle apparently got its name because it is difficult to tell apart from its cousin. They prefer to infest flour, milled grain, dried fruit, nuts, and chocolate.



Indian Meal Moths

The larvae of these moths are about 3/8 inch long and cream colored (looking like a small maggot), while the adults can have a wing spread over 3/4 inch and appear copper and brown in color. The larvae infest grain meal, flour, whole grains, dried fruits, chocolate, dog food, bird seed, and dried baked goods. They produce a silk webbing over the materials they are eating, which they fill with their droppings, and then crawl to a nearby crack or crevice to pupate and emerge as adults.



Sawtoothed Grain Beetle

These insects are dark brown, flat, and about 1/10 inch long. They feed on bread, flour, cereals, pasta, nuts, dried fruits, sugar, and dried meats. It's flat body allows it to penetrate very small cracks and into packaged foods that aren't perfectly sealed.



Angoumois Grain Moth

The adults typically have a wing span of 1/2 inch or slightly larger, with the wings having a hairy appearance and are pale yellowish brown. The larvae are about 1/4 inch long and yellow. The larvae infest whole grains or tightly packed materials, and can be found in barley, rice, corn, oats, and seeds.

Whether the pest is one of these more common or a different insect, the control methods are similar. Sanitation is the key! Clean up spills promptly to keep food away from these insects. If you find an infestation, discard the product immediately before it spreads to other foods. Sometimes it takes some investigating to find the breeding source– don't forget to look into cracks, crevices, and under shelving and equipment. It doesn't take much to breed a large population. Contact your licensed pest control company for help in finding the source. They also have traps and baits that will help eliminate the insects you already have.

Also a key is to keep your products rotated– First in, first out (FIFO). The longer dried foods are around, the more chances pests have to locate and get established in your facility. Finally, buy your product from a reputable source. Buying dried product because it's a few cents cheaper will come back to haunt you if the food is infested.

Source: Village of Arlington Heights Health Department, IL

Pathogen Spotlight: *E.Coli 0157:H7*

Hemorrhagic Colitis-Shiga toxin-producing Escherichia coli (including 0157:H7, 026:H11, 0111:H8, 0158:NM): Onsite time: 1 to 8 days, or 1 to 3 days, Duration of illness: 5 to 10 days, or 3 to greater than 7 days

Shiga toxin-producing E. coli is naturally found in the intestines of cattle, which can contaminate the meat during the slaughtering process. Although it has been associated with contaminated produce, it is more commonly associated with undercooked ground beef.

The food most commonly associated with this pathogen is ground beef (raw and undercooked), and contaminated produce.



The symptoms most often associated with hemorrhagic Colitis are diarrhea (eventually becomes bloody), and abdominal cramps. In severe cases of illness, people may develop hemolytic uremic syndrome (HUS). Patients whose illness progresses to HUS have a mortality rate of 3% to 5%. The bacteria can be present in the feces of infected people for several weeks after symptoms appear.

The critical prevention measures are to reduce the bacteria in the food through cooking. The food (particularly ground beef) must be properly cooked to the required minimum internal temperatures (155°F for at least 15 seconds). It is also critical to prevent the transfer of the bacteria to food through cross contamination between raw meat and RTE food. Food handlers must be excluded from the establishment if they have diarrhea or have been diagnosed with hemorrhagic colitis.



Source: CDC Bad Bug Book, CDC.gov

Two Asian Restaurants, Kansas City, MO. — December 2013

The Kansas City Health Department temporarily closed two Asian restaurants.

Restaurant#1: After a routine inspection, the department said the restaurant was closed due to "the history and number of repeat violations." The restaurant had 15 critical violations, including employee washing hands without soap and then drying his hands on his dirty apron, and fried chicken and rice held at improper temperatures.

No food preparation, service or sales may take place until the restaurant has corrected the violations. The restaurant must then be re-inspected. A manager said the restaurant was in the process of correcting the problems.

Restaurant #2: The second restaurant was closed late Friday afternoon due to "excessive" roaches.

The restaurant was cited for 10 critical violations, including live roaches in food bags underneath the prep table, on the wall behind the water heater in the kitchen, and inside egg roll packages in the kitchen.

In this case, it was the presence of live roaches that resulted in the closure, as that indicated that the pest control methods were not working, a health department spokesman said.

Restaurant officials could not be reached for comment. However, the restaurant was re-inspected, had just one critical violation and was allowed to reopen Tuesday evening.

http://www.kansascity.com

Pizzeria, Baltimore, MD. — December 2013

This restaurant was closed by the local health department for failing to maintain the potentially hazardous food outside of the temperature danger zone. They also observed a severe mouse infestation, and unsanitary conditions within the facility. The restaurant was closed for six days and was allowed to reopen after re-inspection.

http://data.baltimoresun.com

Sushi Restaurant, Baltimore, MD. — December 2013

The sushi restaurant was closed by the local health department due to the following citations observed: There was no pH meter on site to verify acidification of the sushi rice. There was a severe rodent infestation observed by the inspector. The restaurant was observed to be in an unsanitary condition. The restaurant was closed for five days and was allowed to reopen after the above mentioned violations were corrected.

http://data.baltimoresun.com

Buffet Style Restaurant, Washington, DC. — December 2013

The buffet restaurant ordered to close due to 13 violations observed during their routine inspection. The closure order was given due to the observation of critical violations like "hot food held at improper temperatures," Instead of the safe, mandated 140°Fdegrees, hamburgers were held at 92°F, and chicken at 93°F and cross contamination risks, "like lettuce and spinach being washed" "while raw chicken (is) also being washed in the (same) sink." The lettuce and spinach were immediately discarded. The restaurant will remain closed until the above mentioned violations are corrected.

http://www.wusa9.com

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